SLAC TIPS FOR APA DOCUMENTATION STYLE

Use the documentation style your instructor assigns or finds acceptable. This handout explains APA (American Psychological Association) guidelines for style and crediting sources in papers. If your major requires APA format, you should purchase the APA Publication Manual.

In the APA format, briefly identify your sources in the text of your paper and give full information about where to find the source in a list of references at the end of your paper.

When you use the words or original ideas of another person in your writing (whether gathered from traditional sources such as books or from the Internet), you must cite the sources. If the exact words of the original source are used, quotation marks are necessary. Though paraphrasing or summarizing an original source does not require quotation marks, you must still document the source. Failure to cite sources of information is PLAGIARISM.

You can find specific information about plagiarism on pages 15-16 and pages 170-174 in the Publication Manual. Also, see the following site for more information on plagiarism: http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html. Texas State University-San Marcos has severe penalties for plagiarism.

NOTE: If you have a type of source or situation not covered here, consult the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (6th ed.).

A FEW RULES TO CONSIDER WHEN USING APA STYLE

1. Space once after all punctuation as follows: commas, colons, and semicolons. Consult your professor about punctuation concluding sentences as the Publication Manual recommends two spaces after a period at the end of a sentence but does not require two. Space once after periods that separate parts of a reference citation and after the periods in personal names (e.g., J. R. Zhang).

2. Display a quotation of 40 or more words in a double-spaced, freestanding block of text, indented five spaces from the left margin and with quotation marks omitted.

APA GUIDELINES CONCERNING IN-TEXT CITATIONS

To identify sources, list the name(s) of the author(s) and the year of publication. For example:

1. One author: Kessler (2003) proves . . . (in the text of the sentence) or (Kessler, 2007) (following the end of the sentence)

2. Two authors: Kurtines and Szapocznik (2003) state . . . or (Kurtines & Szapocznik, 2003)

3. Three authors: Bradley, Ramirez, and Soo (1999)
or (Bradley, Ramirez, & Soo, 1999)

Subsequent citations (after the first citation) for three authors: Bradley et al. (1999) or (Bradley et al., 1999)


Subsequent citations (after the first citation) for four authors: Kisangau et al. (2007) or (Kisangau et al., 2007)


Subsequent citations (after the first citation) for five authors: Walker et al. (2008) or (Walker et al., 2008)

6. Six or more authors: Kosslyn et al. (2007) or (Kosslyn et al., 2007) [In the first citation AND in subsequent citations, after the first author, use et al. in place of the other authors’ names.]

7. Groups as author: National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH, 2003) or (National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2003)

Subsequent citations (after the 1st citation) for groups as authors: NIMH (2003) or (NIMH, 2003)

8. No Author: Cite the first few words of the entry from your References list (usually the title) and the year. ("Study Finds," 2007) [For articles, enclose the title in quotation marks.] (College Bound Seniors, 2008) [For books and pamphlets, italicize the title.]
OTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING IN-TEXT CITATIONS

Treat references to legal materials like references to works with no author.

When a work’s author is listed as anonymous, cite the word Anonymous in place of an author’s name: (Anonymous, 1998).

Order the citations of two or more works within the same parentheses alphabetically in the same order in which they appear on the reference list—including citations that would otherwise shorten to et al.

(Miller, 1999; Shafranske & Mahoney, 1998).

If you are citing a specific part of a source, identify the page, paragraph, chapter, figure, table, or equation at the appropriate point in the text. For direct quotations, always give page or paragraph numbers. Note that page and paragraph, but not chapter, are abbreviated in such text citations:

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2005, p. 10)
(Myers, 2007, para. 5)
(Shimamura, 1989, Chapter 3)

If the document includes headings and neither paragraph nor page numbers are visible, cite the heading and the number of the paragraph following it to direct the reader to the location of the quoted material. In some cases in which no page or paragraph numbers are visible, headings may be too unwieldy to cite in full. Instead, use a short title enclosed in quotation marks for the parenthetical citation.

(Discussion section, para. 1)
(Golan, Kuchler, & Krissof, 2007, “Mandatory Labeling Has Targeted,” para. 4)
[The heading was “Mandatory Labeling Has Targeted Information Gaps and Social Objectives.”]

Personal communications, such as electronic mail messages or messages from nonarchived discussion groups or electronic bulletin boards, should only be referenced in the body of your text since they do not provide recoverable data. (Do not include them on your reference list.) See that the personal communications you do cite have scholarly relevance. In the text of your paper, give the initials as well as the last name of the communicator, note that the source of your information is a personal communication, and provide as exact a date as possible:

T.K. Lutes (personal communication, April 18, 2007)
(V.-G. Nguyen, personal communication, September 28, 2009)

REFERENCE LISTS

The reference list at the end of your paper should include all of the sources that contributed ideas and information to your paper.
The title "References" should be centered one inch from the top of the page. Use upper- and lowercase letters.

The list is arranged in alphabetical order by the first word in the reference, whether it is a person's last name, a group name, or the first word of a title (ignore "A," "An," and "The").

For article titles, capitalize only the first word of the title (and the subtitle, if any) and proper names. Do not underline the title or place quotation marks around it.

Journal and book titles are given in full, capitalized, and italicized.

The reference list must be double-spaced, and entries should have a hanging indent.

Acceptable abbreviations for items in the reference list can be found in the latest edition of the APA style guide.

REFERENCING ELECTRONIC SOURCES

Be sure to include as much electronic retrieval information as needed for others to locate the sources you cited. Provide Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) whenever possible. If you need to include a URL instead, be sure that the address works.

Note: Reproduce the URL faithfully using lowercase letters and presenting all punctuation exactly. If possible, copy and paste the URL into your paper. Do not insert a hyphen if you need to break a URL across lines; instead, break the URL before a punctuation mark (the exception would be breaking up http://). Do not add a period after the URL. This sample URL leads to the APA electronic references page: http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html

While you are conducting research on the Internet, it is important to determine the accuracy of the information you gather. If you are not researching within a database of peer-reviewed journals, check the website in question to be sure it has listed the author and/or the institution who published the site/page and the author's credentials. Understand that the author of an article is not usually the webmaster.

Also, try to use sites that have a preferred domain (.edu, .gov, .org, or .net). Additionally, check to see if the page and any links it contains are current and updated frequently.

Finally, consult your instructor about any information you are uncertain is worthwhile.

DOIs

In both print and electronic sources, you should include the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) when possible. The DOI is an alphanumerical system developed by publishers and assigned to articles.

Look for the DOI under the citation information for the article on the research database. Sometimes “The DOI may be hidden under a button labeled Article, CrossRef, PubMed, or another full-text vendor name” (APA, 2010, p.189). Use this format when you include the DOI in your references list: “doi:xxxxxx”
NOTE: To save space here, examples of reference list entries have been single-spaced.

General Reference Forms:


Examples from:

REFERENCES TO PERIODICALS

References to Journal Articles

1. Print journal article, two authors (journal paginated by issue)

Klimoski, R., & Palmer, S. (1993). The ADA and the hiring process in organizations. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 45*(2), 10-36.  [If each issue of a journal begins on page 1, give the issue number in parentheses immediately after the volume number.]

2. Print journal article, three to six authors


3. Online journal article with DOI, more than seven authors


4. Online journal article without DOI (uses URL instead), two authors

References to Newspaper Articles

1. Newspaper article, no author

[Alphabetize works with no author by the first significant word in the title.]
[Precede page numbers for newspaper articles with "p." or "pp."]

2. Newspaper article, discontinuous pages

[If an article appears on discontinuous pages, give all page numbers, and separate the numbers with a comma (e.g., pp. B1, B3, B5-B7).]

3. Online newspaper article

[For newspaper or magazine articles, or newsletters, give the exact date of publication if possible.]

References to Magazine Articles

1. Online magazine article

[Note that while references to print magazine articles include page numbers, there are no page numbers in a reference to an online magazine article.]
[When possible, the URL should link directly to the article.]

REFERENCES TO BOOKS

1. Entire book, print version


2. Electronic version of print book


3. Edited book

[For a book with just one author and an editor as well, list the editor in parentheses after the title, as a translator is treated in example 26, p. 204.]
4. Book, chapter or entry in a reference work


5. Entry in online reference work, no author or editor


REFERENCES TO REPORTS AND INSTITUTIONAL WEBSITES

1. Corporate author, online government report


[Report titles are italicized unlike journal article titles.]

2. Authored report, from nongovernmental organization


3. Report from institutional archive (university program or department website)


[If a document is contained within a large and complex website (such as that for a university or a government agency), identify the host organization and the relevant program or department before giving the URL for the document itself. Precede the URL with a colon.]

REFERENCES TO CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

1. Symposium contribution

2. Paper presentation or poster session


3. Paper presented at a virtual conference


REFERENCES TO INTERNET MESSAGE BOARDS, ELECTRONIC MAILING LISTS, AND OTHER ONLINE SOURCES

Electronic mailing lists
Electronic mail sent from one individual to another should be cited as a personal communication, and is only cited in the text of the paper.

Newsgroups, online forums and discussion groups, and electronic mailing lists (listservs)
Take care when citing electronic discussion sources; as a rule, these are not referenced in formal publications because they are generally not peer-reviewed, are not regarded as having scholarly content, and are not archived for a significant length of time. Any message cited should have scholarly value and be retrievable. If no archives are maintained, then the message will not be retrievable and should not be included in the reference list. At best, it can be cited as a personal communication.

[If the author's full name is available, list the last name first followed by initials. If only a screen name is available, use the screen name. Provide the exact date of the posting. Follow the date with the subject line of the message (also referred to as the "thread"); do not italicize it. In brackets, include a description of the message. Also include the name of the list to which this message was posted if this information is not part of the URL. Provide the address for the archived version of the message.]

1. Message posted to online forum, newsgroup, or discussion group


2. Message posted to an electronic mailing list